

## PLACE IDENTIFICATION FORM

## ADDRESS

Rathmines Road

## TYPE

- ☐ Single Residence      ☐ Multiple Unit Res.  
☐ Shop      ☐ Outbuildings  
☐ Office      ☐ Industrial Building  
☐ Landscape feature      ☐ Public building  
☐ View      ☒ Other

## TITLE

Auburn Primary School no. 2498

## EXISTING DESIGNATION

HBR ☐ GBR ☒ AHC ☐ NT ☐ VAS ☐

## STREETSCAPE LEVEL

1 ☐ 2 ☒ 3 ☐  
 SIGNIFICANT ☐ SIGNIFICANT ☒  
 STREET TREES      KERB & GUTTERS

## GRADING

A ☒ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐  
 KEYNOTE BUILDING ☐

## RECOMMENDED FOR

HBR/GBR ☒ AHC ☒ URBAN CONSERVATION AREA ☒  
 VAS ☐ PLANNING SCHEME PROTECTION ☒  
 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE ☐ OTHER ☒ *significant tree*

SURVEY DATE Nov. 91.  
 NEG FILE 65.15-17  
 Title  
 Vol.  
 Fol.

## THEME

- ☐ Early Settlement  
☐ Mansions  
☐ Victorian Garden Suburb  
☒ Municipal dev.  
☐ 1870s growth  
☐ Garden villas  
☐ Working enclaves  
☐ Commercial Centres  
☐ Edwardian Prosperity  
☐ Interwar Housing  
☐ Flats and Offices

## CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Date 1889-1890  
 Architect J. Edmund Burke.  
 Builder Bale (1889-90),  
 Elements Yates (1900),  
 R. Hamilton (1905-06)



- ☐ Contributing garden      ☐ Original or early hard landscape layout  
☐ Landmark tree      ☐ Original or early fence

## NOTABLE FEATURES/SIGNIFICANCE

See attached

INTEGRITY    Good ☒  
                  Fair ☐  
                  Poor ☐

CONDITION    Good ☒  
                  Fair ☐  
                  Poor ☐

## CROSS REFERENCED INFORMATION

Associated significant garden ☐

## AUBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL NO. 2948

### RATHMINES ROAD

#### History

Constructed in the prestigious Village of Rathmines area in the boom years 1889-90,<sup>1</sup> Auburn Primary School was designed by the architect, J. Edmund Burke. It originally consisted of three classrooms downstairs, three upstairs and the Head Teacher's office.<sup>2</sup> It cost 4,147 pounds 16 shillings and the contractor was J.M. Bale.<sup>3</sup>

By 1898 numbers had reached nearly 700, leading to the leasing of the Bible Church Hall in Rathmines Road. Even the Head Teacher had to share his office with a Grade 3 of 27 children. In 1901 additions costing 1,602 pounds were completed, the contractor being J. Yates.<sup>4</sup> In 1905, the Education Department purchased more land. The Caretaker's quarters were removed at this time.<sup>5</sup> Later, in October 1913, after recommendations from the Hawthorn School Board of Advice, a 4,000 pounds infant room was opened. Additional purchases of land in 1913, 1923, 1924 and 1935 led to the enlargement of the playground and "gave the school its magnificent frontage in Rathmines Road". A final purchase in 1963 gave the school access to Harcourt Street. The school hall opened in 1963 and a library building was also begun in the 1960s.<sup>6</sup> During the 1920s, the original building was remodelled and renovated. It has recently been further upgraded.<sup>7</sup>

Notable ex-pupils include Phillip Crosby - Morrison, the eminent naturalist; Frank Stilwell, geologist to the Australian Antarctic Expedition in 1911-13 and the Hon. Secretary of the Royal Society of Victoria; George Cook, B. Sc., Secretary of the C.S.I.R.O.; John Arnold Seitz, M.A., Director of Education.<sup>8</sup>

#### Description

Although extended several times the picturesque styling of this building has been consistently executed. The main section is two storeys. At ground level is a single level entrance door with elaborate gable barge embellishment. To the left a two storey gabled wing forms one leg of the original design. It

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1. Historic Buildings Council File No. 603757 M; PWD Summary Contract Book No. 337 (1889-90).
  2. *Vision and Realisation*, Vol. 3, pp. 395-396; *Village of Rathmines*, Hawthorn Historical Society, Area Walk V, 1988.
  3. H.B.C.
  4. *Vision and Realisation*.
  5. H.B.C.
  6. *Vison and Realisation*.
  7. Gwen McWilliam, "Harcourt Street and the Village of Rathmines", 1991, pp. 30-41.
  8. *Vision and Realisation*.



## Auburn Primary School No. 2948 continued

is decoratively executed in polychrome brickwork using brown, red and cream bricks. The window openings are relatively small and multipaned, almost in tudor style. Above, the gable barge is heavily decorated with quatrefoils and dentil coursing. The steeply pitched gable roof includes small ventilator dormers, a circular bellcote and dramatic polychrome chimney stacks.

To the right hand side of the entry is a second two storey wing, wider than the first and similarly detailed, though the windows on the first floor are paired and enclosed within a large lancet arch. The quatrefoil pattern is either missing or was not constructed on this gable barge.

A single storey wing attaches to the central two storey gable with matching paired vents and similar gable barge details. Windows are substantially larger to this wing however.

The whole is set on a bluestone base and stands in now extensive grounds. The building is a landmark in Rathmines Road and dominates the open parklands adjoining.

### Assessment

A magnificent essay in schools Gothic, much promoted by the architect Bastow for the Education Department from its formation in 1872. This building, though not by Bastow, follows the trend set by him and even earlier at Hawthorn West Primary School in the 1870s for use of Gothic forms for schools. This style type had been advocated for schools in Britain. Its ecclesiastical associations build on the earlier connections between the churches and education in Victoria and Britain. This is a particularly fine example of its type. It is more elaborate than the earlier Hawthorn West school and the single storey Glenferrie school of 1877 by Chief Architect Henry Bastow. It incorporates several of the details extensively used by Bastow including: the multipaned windows; the gable end lancet arch used over paired window openings; the polychrome brick; decorative form; and dormer roof vents. Almost identical schools are found at Brunwicke South of 1886 and Yarraville West of 1887, believed to be by Bastow.<sup>9</sup> Bourke appears to have followed the precedent set by the earlier schools. Burke practised on his own between 1893-1913, except for a short period between 1897 and 1901 when he joined with Schreiber. His work includes commercial premises, houses and churches.

Auburn Primary school is amongst the best of the two storey picturesque Gothic schools, a style strongly encouraged by the new and powerful Education Department from 1872.

### Significance

### State

1. Architecturally significant as one of the best examples of the two storey picturesque Gothic schools, a style strongly encouraged by the new powerful Education Department from 1872. A late example of this style.
2. Socially significant for its community focus in the Rathmines Village area.

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<sup>9</sup>. L. Burchell, Victorian Schools, 1980.



Rathminel Road  
Auburn Primary School